

As COVID fueled the drug crisis, Native Americans hit worst

BEMIDJI, Minn. (AP) — Rachel Taylor kissed her fingertips and pressed them to the crow sewn onto a leather bag on the couch in the living room. "Oh, my baby," she whispered. She hugged the buckskin satchel filled with her son's ashes. Nearly a year ago, she opened his bedroom door and screamed so loud she woke the neighbor. Kyle Domrese was face down on his bed, one of more than 100,000 Americans lost in a year to overdoses as the COVID-19 pandemic aggravated America's addiction disaster. When he was 4, the medicine man had given him his Ojibwe name: Aandegoons — "little crow." She traced the outline of the black bird on the sack.

"Love you," Taylor said to the bag, as she does each time she leaves her home in this city surrounded by three Ojibwe reservations in remote northern Minnesota. As the pandemic ravaged the country, deaths from drug overdoses surged by nearly 30%, climbing to a record high. The drug crisis also diversified from an overwhelmingly white affliction to killing people of color with staggering speed. The death rate last year was highest among Native Americans, for whom COVID-19 piled yet more despair on communities already confronting generations of trauma, poverty, unemployment and underfunded health systems.

Continued on next page



COVID SIDE-EFFECT

Rachel Taylor clutches a buckskin satchel filled with the ashes of her son, Kyle "Little Crow" Domrese, pictured at right, who died of an overdose, as she sits in the home they shared in Bemidji, Minn., Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021.

Associated Press

Papillon
RESTAURANT

- * Outdoor Seating
- * Early Bird from 5 till 7
- * Live music

Chef's Garden

Papillon RESTAURANT

*Chef's Tasting Menu
by Chef Martijn Liebrechts
Located in "The Secret Garden"*

NOORD MEDICAL CENTER, NOORD 63

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

FOR NON-LIFE THREATENING ILLNESSES AND INJURIES

WWW.URGENTCARE.AW

BOOK YOUR PCR & ANTIGEN TEST

WWW.COVIDARUBA.COM

Urgent Care Aruba

TRAVEL INSURANCE ACCEPTED
SEEK REIMBURSEMENT ONCE BACK HOME

Ike's bistro
MEDITERRANEAN & CARIBBEAN

ROMANTIC DINNER UNDER THE STARS
SURPRISE YOUR LOVED ONE

\$160 per couple
Including a bottle of sparkling wine

Reservations required | +297 522 3444 or ikesbistro@manchebo.com
Located at Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa | excl. 15% service charge

Fit2fly COVID-19 Testing Center
NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED!

**NAAT (Abott ID):
 Result in 30 minutes!**
**PCR / Antigen Test
 SAME DAY RESULT!**



MedCare Clinic
 URGENT CARE

Tel: (+297) 280-0630

info@medcare.aw / www.medcare.aw

Locations: The Cove Mall (8:00 AM - 6:00 PM) Medcare near Courtyard by Marriott (8:00 AM - 2:00 PM)

Continued from Front

Taylor's tribe, the White Earth Nation, studied the lives they've lost to addiction.

"Their death certificates say they died of an overdose, but that's not right," one member of their study group said.

These deaths were a culmination of far more than that: Despite their resilience, Native Americans carry in their blood 500 years worth of pain from being robbed of their land, their language, their culture, their children. In living people's memory, children were taken from their families and sent to boarding schools with the motto, "Kill the Indian, save the man."

"What they died of is a broken heart," the study says. For years, Taylor tried to break the cycle.

Her grandmother was sent to a boarding school, where she was taught to be so ashamed of her Ojibwe language that she would only speak it once she'd eased the pain by drinking. Taylor had her daughter when she was 19 and her son a few years later. She'd lost custody of them for a couple years as she battled her own addiction. She told them she wished she could fix all the dysfunctional things that happened when she was using.

"Then I thought, well, then my mom would have to go back and fix things, and then my grandma would have to go back, it would have to go on like that for generations," she said.

Taylor had lived in more than 50 places before she turned 18, and faced sexual, physical and mental abuse.

She prayed to her creator to spare her children, and told her son every day that she loved him.

White Earth Nation too worked hard to save its people from addiction, and



Rachel Taylor scrolls through photos of her son, Kyle Domrese, pictured here the day before he died of a drug overdose in January, as she stands in the home they shared in Bemidji, Minn., Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021. Domrese once wrote her a letter because he thought his addiction was killing him: "I can't control it. I hope you can forgive me. I'm sorry, I love you, I wanted to spend more time with you."

in many years lost no one to overdoses on the reservation. But then the pandemic arrived and proved too painful for some.

Taylor and her son quarantined together at her home in Bemidji, a city of 15,000 people.

He'd started abusing pills as a teenager when he got a prescription after having surgery for an infected finger. Then, consumed by the madness of addiction, he would smoke anything — methamphetamine, heroin, fentanyl — that might

quiet his anxiety and depression.

The months of isolation dragged on, and he said it seemed like the pandemic would never end. He told her he felt like a bum.

"He just gave up," she said. All around them, people were dying.

On the White Earth reservation, ambulance calls for overdoses tripled. They posted big red signs in gas stations and tribal buildings: "overdose alert."

The number of overdoses the regional drug task

force investigated skyrocketed from 20 in 2019 to 88 last year, said Joe Kleszyk, its commander. Fifteen of those were fatal, triple the year before.

This year, there's been 148 overdoses, and 24 of those victims died. The vast majority were Native American.

When the American government forced Native Americans off their land, it signed treaties with tribes promising to provide for them necessities like health care. The dead from ad-

diction prove it's never kept its word, said Minnesota Sen. Tina Smith.

Indian health care has been underfunded for years. The national average for health care spending is just over \$11,000 per person, but tribal health systems receive about a third of that and urban Indian groups even less, according to the National Council of Urban Indian Health. COVID-19 added another blow to this already stressed system.

Smith introduced a bill this summer that would usher \$200 million in grants to Indian organizations to bolster mental health and addiction treatment. It is stalled in Congress.

"I'm sick of telling people that their kids are dead," Kleszyk said.

In January, Rachel Taylor's heart began aching.

"It was like my heart knew before I did," she said. "My heart was broken four days before he even died."

On January 11, she opened his bedroom door. His skin was purple and ice cold.

"Come back, my baby, come back," she screamed.

The toxicology report said that he'd died of a combination of alprazolam, the drug in Xanax, and fentanyl.

At first she put his ashes in an urn, but it was sharp metal. A friend made the buckskin bag that she could hug.

The anniversary of his death is approaching on Jan. 11, and it is customary in her culture to return him to nature after a year of grieving. But every morning, she kisses his bag. He'd always loved to laugh, so Taylor teases it. "Keep an eye on the cat," she'll say. Then she tells the cat to keep an eye on him. "The medicine man says I have to let him go back to the Earth," she said. "But I don't think I'm going to be able to do that. He left me too soon." □

Associated Press

2021 on track to surpass last year as nation's deadliest

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. health officials say 2021 is shaping up to be even deadlier than last year.

It's too early to say for sure, since all the death reports for November and December won't be in for many weeks. But based on available information, it seems likely 2021 will surpass last year's record number of deaths by at least 15,000, said Robert Anderson, who oversees the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's death statistics. Last year was the most lethal in U.S. history, due largely to the COVID-19 pandemic. A CDC report being released Wednesday shows 2020 was actually even worse than the agency previously reported.

The report presents a final tally for last year of about 3.384 million U.S. deaths, about 25,000 more than a provisional count released earlier this year. Such jumps between provisional and final numbers are common, but 2020's difference was higher than usual because of a lag in death records from some states that switched to new electronic



Medical staff move a COVID-19 patient who died to a loading dock to hand off to a funeral home van, at the Willis-Knighton Medical Center in Shreveport, La., Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2021.

Associated Press

reporting systems, Anderson said.

The CDC this week also revised its estimate of life expectancy for 2020. Life expectancy at birth that year was 77 years, a decrease of 1.8 years from 2019. The agency previously estimated the decline at 1.5 years. Anderson said it's likely that the nation will see more

than 3.4 million deaths in 2021. Other experts said they think deaths for the year will end up either about the same as in 2020, or higher.

"It's really sad," said Ali Mokdad, a mortality statistics expert at the University of Washington.

A large reason is COVID-19, which hit the U.S. hard

around March 2020 and became the nation's No. 3 cause of death, behind heart disease and cancer. Last year, COVID-19 was the underlying cause in about 351,000 deaths. This year, the number is already at 356,000, and the final tally could hit 370,000, Anderson said.

Experts also think the 2021

numbers will be affected by a drug overdose epidemic that is expected to — for the first time — surpass 100,000 deaths in a calendar year.

An increase in annual deaths is not unusual. The annual count rose by nearly 16,000 from 2018 to 2019 — before COVID-19 appeared.

But the coronavirus clearly had an impact. The nation had the smallest population gain rate in history between July 2020 and July 2021, primarily because of the COVID-19 deaths, said Kenneth Johnson, a University of New Hampshire researcher.

Officials had hoped COVID-19 vaccines would slash the death count. But vaccinations became available gradually this year, with only 7 million fully vaccinated at the end of January and 63 million at the end of March. Since then, many Americans have chosen not to get vaccinated. The CDC says 204 million Americans are fully vaccinated — or about 65% of the U.S. population that are age 5 and older and eligible for shots. □

Secret Service: Nearly \$100B stolen in pandemic relief funds

By **JENNIFER McDERMOTT**
Associated Press

Nearly \$100 billion at minimum has been stolen from COVID-19 relief programs set up to help businesses and people who lost their jobs due to the pandemic, the U.S. Secret Service said Tuesday.

The estimate is based on Secret Service cases and data from the Labor Department and the Small Business Administration, said Roy Dotson, the agency's national pandemic fraud recovery coordinator, in an interview. The Secret Service didn't include COVID-19 fraud cases prosecuted by the Justice Department.

While roughly 3% of the \$3.4 trillion dispersed, the amount stolen from pandemic benefits programs shows "the sheer size of the pot is enticing to the crimi-

nals," Dotson said.

Most of that figure comes from unemployment fraud. The Labor Department reported about \$87 billion in unemployment benefits could have been paid improperly, with a significant portion attributable to fraud.

The Secret Service said it has seized more than \$1.2 billion while investigating unemployment insurance and loan fraud and has returned more than \$2.3 billion of fraudulently obtained funds by working with financial partners and states to reverse transactions. The Secret Service says it has more than 900 active criminal investigations into pandemic fraud, with cases in every state, and 100 people have been arrested so far.

The Justice Department said last week that its fraud

section had prosecuted over 150 defendants in more than 95 criminal cases and had seized over \$75 million in cash proceeds derived from fraudulently obtained Paycheck Protection Program funds, as well as numerous real estate properties and luxury items purchased with the proceeds.

One of the best-known programs created through the March 2020 CARES Act, PPP offered low-interest, forgivable loans to small businesses struggling to meet payroll and other expenses during pandemic-related shutdowns.

Law enforcement early in the pandemic focused on fraud related to personal protective equipment, the Secret Service said. Authorities have now prioritized the exploitation of pandemic-related relief



Web pages used to show information for collecting unemployment insurance in Virginia, right, and reporting fraud and identity theft in Pennsylvania, are displayed on the respective state web pages, on Feb. 26, 2021, in Zellenople, Pa.

Associated Press

because the federal funding through the CARES Act attracted the attention of individuals and organized criminal networks worldwide. "Can we stop fraud? Will we? No, but I think we can definitely prosecute those that need to be pros-

ecuted and we can do our best to recover as much fraudulent pandemic funds that we can," said Dotson, who is the Secret Service's assistant special agent in charge of the agency's field office in Jacksonville, Florida. □

Pause on student loan payments is extended through May 1

By COLLEEN LONG

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Biden administration on Wednesday extended a student loan moratorium that has allowed tens of millions of Americans to put off debt payments during the pandemic.

Under the action, payments on federal student loans will remain paused through May 1. Interest rates will remain at 0% during that period, and debt collection efforts will be suspended. Those measures have been in place since early in the pandemic, but were set to expire Jan. 31. President Joe Biden said financial recovery from the pandemic will take longer than job recovery, especially for those with student loans.

"We know that millions of student loan borrowers are still coping with the impacts of the pandemic and need some more time before resuming payments," he said in a statement, adding it was an issue he and the vice president "both care deeply about."

The omicron variant of COVID-19 that has swept through the U.S. with a fury



Students walk on the campus of Indiana University of Pennsylvania in Indiana, Pa., Oct. 21, 2020. Associated Press

has lent a new urgency to the question over whether the moratorium would be extended. Administration officials had initially said they expected the January extension to be the last. But even as the economy improves, there are concerns that borrowers are not ready to start payments again. Once the moratorium ends, those who were already behind on payments could have wages

and benefits taken away as part of debt collection efforts.

The policy applies to more than 36 million Americans who have student loans that are held by the federal government. Their collective debt totals more than \$1.37 trillion, according to the latest Education Department data. About a third of borrowers are in default or delinquency and the average monthly

payment is \$400 a month. Officials said the pause also helps about 5 million other borrowers currently in school who are not yet paying back loans but are accruing interest.

Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said in a statement that the extension will allow for repayment plans responsive to the financial needs of the students, including an income-driven repayment plan.

The continued pause "will provide critical relief to borrowers who continue to face financial hardships as a result of the pandemic, and will allow our administration to assess the impacts of omicron on student borrowers," Cardona said.

The Trump administration initially suspended federal student loan payments in March 2020 and later extended it through January 2021. Biden has now moved to continue it twice, and the Education Department raised concerns about the effects of suddenly restarting payments, both for students and administratively within the department.

The extension of the loan moratorium comes as decision whether to erase large swaths of student debt altogether is still on the table. Some Democrats are pushing for mass forgiveness of debt. But Biden has questioned whether he has the authority for that kind of mass cancellation, and legal scholars differ on that. Earlier this year, Biden asked the Education and Justice departments to study the issue. □

DOJ says inmates on home confinement can stay out of prison



Attorney General Merrick Garland speaks during a Tribal Nations Summit during Native American Heritage Month, in the South Court Auditorium on the White House campus, Nov. 15, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department on Tuesday reversed its own legal opinion and said it would allow federal inmates released on home confinement because of the coronavirus pandemic to stay out of prison.

The decision announced by Attorney General Merrick Garland came after months of pressure on President Joe Biden from criminal justice groups, lawmakers and other advocates. In the final days of the Trump administration, DOJ said

released inmates would have to return to prison at the end of the emergency period declared during the pandemic. Nearly 3,000 former inmates would have potentially been taken back to prison.

DOJ's Office of Legal Counsel said Tuesday that it did not "lightly depart from our precedents, and we have given the views expressed in our prior opinion careful and respectful consideration."

The office concluded that the Federal Bureau of Prisons' "preexisting authorities does not require that prisoners in extended home confinement be returned en masse to correctional facilities when the emergency period ends."

The original releases was authorized under the authority of the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act that former

President Donald Trump signed in March 2020. As the virus spread, then-Attorney General William Barr directed federal prisons to increase the use of home confinement and expedite the release of eligible high-risk inmates as coronavirus cases surged, particularly in detention settings. Priority was given to those at low- or medium-security prisons where the virus was spreading fastest.

"Thousands of people on home confinement have reconnected with their families, have found gainful employment, and have followed the rules," Garland said in a statement. "In light of today's Office of Legal Counsel opinion, I have directed that the Department engage in a rulemaking process to ensure that the Department lives up to the letter and the spirit of

the CARES Act." Garland added: "We will exercise our authority so that those who have made rehabilitative progress and complied with the conditions of home confinement, and who in the interests of justice should be given an opportunity to continue transitioning back to society, are not unnecessarily returned to prison."

More than 35,000 inmates were released as part of the effort to ease pandemic conditions as long as they met certain criteria, including they were not likely a danger to others. But 2,830 of the 4,879 people who remain on home confinement were slated to return to prison, the BOP said. The others have completed their sentences. Garland called advocates Tuesday prior to the announcement. □



AHATA EXCELLENCE IN 2021 AWARDS



Dutch prosecutors demand life sentences in MH17 downing

By MIKE CORDER

SCHIPHOL, Netherlands

(AP) — Dutch prosecutors on Wednesday demanded life sentences for four suspects in the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine in 2014, saying they caused “deep and irreversible suffering” to relatives of the 298 people killed.

Prosecutors said the four recklessly used a Russian missile to bring down the passenger jet, killing all 298 passengers and crew.

Public prosecutor Manon Ridderbeks made the sentence demand on the third day of a presentation of evidence supporting the indictment. The suspects are being tried in absentia.

“The downing of MH17 with a Buk missile brutally ended the lives of all 298 people on board. Incredibly deep and irreversible suffering has been caused to the next of kin,” Ridderbeks told the court.

Anton Kotte, who lost his son, daughter-in-law and his 6-year-old grandson when MH17 was shot down, said the sentence demand felt like “a new start,” but he added that with prosecution arguments and the deliberation of judges still



Presiding judge Hendrik Steenhuis, right, looks at a television monitor during the ongoing trial and criminal proceedings regarding the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17, at the high security court at Schiphol airport, near Amsterdam, Netherlands, Monday Dec. 20, 2021.

Associated Press

to come, and the possibility for appeals, justice still felt a long way off.

“We just started coming in the right direction ... but the outcome will be in the future,” he said outside court. Life sentences are rare in the Netherlands, where the sentence means the convicted person spending the rest of their life in prison.

But Ridderbeks said it was

a necessary in the MH17 downing because of the extreme nature of the crime and to act as a deterrent.

“It must send an unequivocal international message that aviation deserves the greatest possible protection and that gross acts of violence against it will be punished severely,” she said.

Prosecutors accuse Russians Igor Girkin, Sergey Dubinskiy and Igor Pultov as well as Ukrainian Leonid Kharchenko, who were separatist rebels fighting Ukrainian government forces in 2014, of forming a team that aimed to bring down Ukrainian planes using a missile system trucked in from a Russian military base.

Prosecutor Thijs Berger told judges earlier Wednesday that it’s legally irrelevant that the suspects wanted to shoot down military and not civilian aircraft.

“Legally speaking they were ordinary citizens, they were not allowed to commit any violence,” he said. The trial is being held in the Netherlands at a high security courtroom near Schiphol Airport because nearly 200 of those on board were Dutch citizens. Victims came from a total of 16 different nations.

Wednesday’s sentence demands came amid soaring tensions between Moscow and the West over a Russian troop buildup near Ukraine that has drawn fears of an invasion. Russia has denied plans to attack its neighbor.

Defense lawyers for Pultov, who is the only suspect who is represented in court, will make their presentation to judges in March. Verdicts aren’t expected until September next year at the earliest.

Prosecutors had spent the previous two days explaining in meticulous detail the indictment and evidence backing it up to the panel of judges. □

WHO chief: Blanket booster drives risk prolonging pandemic

BERLIN (AP) — The head of the World Health Organization warned Wednesday that blanket booster programs in rich countries risk prolonging the world’s battle with COVID-19 and said that “no country can boost its way out of the pandemic.”

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the priority must be to reduce deaths and help all countries meet minimum vaccination targets that many still haven’t reached. And he noted that “the vast majority of hospitalizations and deaths are in unvaccinated people, not unboosted people.”

Tedros said that, while vaccines have saved many lives this year, their

unequal sharing “has cost many lives.” In 2021, 3.5 million people were lost to COVID-19, he said, and “all of us need to take ex-

tra precautions” as the new omicron variant advances.

The WHO chief has previously called for a moratori-



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO), talks to the media regarding the coronavirus COVID-19 and WHO’s global health priorities in 2022, during a new press conference, at the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, Monday, Dec. 20, 2021.

Associated Press

um on boosters for healthy adults until the end of this year to counter unequal global vaccine distribution. He said at an online news conference Wednesday that about 20% of vaccine doses being given every day are currently boosters or additional doses.

“Blanket booster programs are likely to prolong the pandemic rather than ending it, by diverting supply to countries that already have high levels of vaccination coverage, giving the virus more opportunity to spread and mutate,” Tedros added.

He said it’s “frankly difficult to understand” that three-quarters of health workers in Africa remain unvaccinated, and distortions in global supply mean that

only half of WHO’s member countries have been able to meet a target of vaccinating 40% of their populations by the end of this year.

Tedros renewed a call for manufacturers and other countries to prioritize the COVAX program to get doses to needier nations and “work together to support those who are furthest behind.”

“Unless we vaccinate the whole world ... I don’t think we can end this pandemic,” Tedros said. But he added that authorities now know the virus better and have effective tools to fight it; “we need to add to that comprehensive implementation and equity, and hope 2022 will end this pandemic.” □



Pinchos Grill & Bar

Open Everyday 5PM - 11PM

Spectacular setting - all tables over the water

Bar snacks & drinks available

Reservations recommended

583-2666
www.pinchosaruba.com
reservations@pinchosgrillaruba.com

Live Music Fri - Sat & Sun

TRAVELER'S CHOICE
tripadvisor

Follow Us Instagram Facebook

Gaza's old battery pileups pose risk to health, environment

By FARES AKRAM
Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)

— Virtually every household in the Gaza Strip relies on batteries to keep their home running -- a result of years of chronic power outages.

These batteries, fueling everything from lights to internet routers to solar panels, have helped mitigate one crisis. But they are causing another one as huge mounds of old and used batteries pile up in a territory lacking the ability to safely dispose of them.

"There is a real danger that these batteries are collected and stored randomly in the open air; not in warehouses," said Mohammed Musleh, an official with Gaza's Environment Authority.

The most pressing threat, he said, is that "the batteries break and ooze liquid that includes sulfuric acid and leaks into the soil and then the water aquifer."

Gaza's Environment Authority estimates that there are 25,000 tons of old batteries piled up at several locations across the tiny and overcrowded coastal territory. There are no recycling facilities in Gaza and a punishing blockade imposed by Israel and Egypt prevents shipping the batteries abroad for safe disposal.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, used batteries create a number of risks to public health and the environment. Different types of batteries contain potentially dangerous types of metals such as mercury, lead and cadmium, while some can catch fire.

Such risks are especially acute in Gaza, where the health care system has been ravaged by years of conflict and lack of funds



A Palestinian worker carries a discarded battery at a warehouse in Jebaliya, Gaza Strip, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021.

Associated Press

and where the environment is already in dire condition. Nearly all of Gaza's water is undrinkable due to high saline levels caused by overextraction.

Israel bombed Gaza's sole power plant during a round of fighting in 2006 and imposed the blockade with Egypt the following year after the Hamas militant group seized power in the strip from rival Palestinian forces. The result: a daily blackout of at least eight hours, punctuated with longer outages that can last for days during winter storms or conflicts.

This has turned batteries into an integral part of day-to-day life for the territory's 2 million residents.

The Gaza City municipality has a hazardous waste unit that is meant to safely dispose of old batteries. But Ahmed Abu Abdu, head of the unit, says very few batteries reach him. Instead, a small private industry has sprouted up.

Every day, collectors in cars or donkey-drawn carts roam around Gaza, calling

over loudspeakers for people wishing to sell old bat-

teries. Depending on their size, old batteries can fetch up to \$2 apiece.

Khaled Ayyad is one of dozens of merchants who buy the old batteries. For eight years, he has collected and stored them at a warehouse in northern Gaza.

Ayyad has one goal in mind: to export the batteries and make a decent profit.

"As the Israeli side allows them (batteries) into Gaza, it has to let them go out," he said. "We can sell them to factories in Israel, European countries and all over the world."

But exporting batteries is still banned, and Ayyad is facing a new dilemma: He has about 500 tons of batteries accumulated in the warehouse. □



Bon Pasco!

TA E MAS SINCERO DESEO DI
STAFF Y PERSONAL DI

SUPER Doit Center **Doit Center Camacuri** **Doit Center Savaneta**

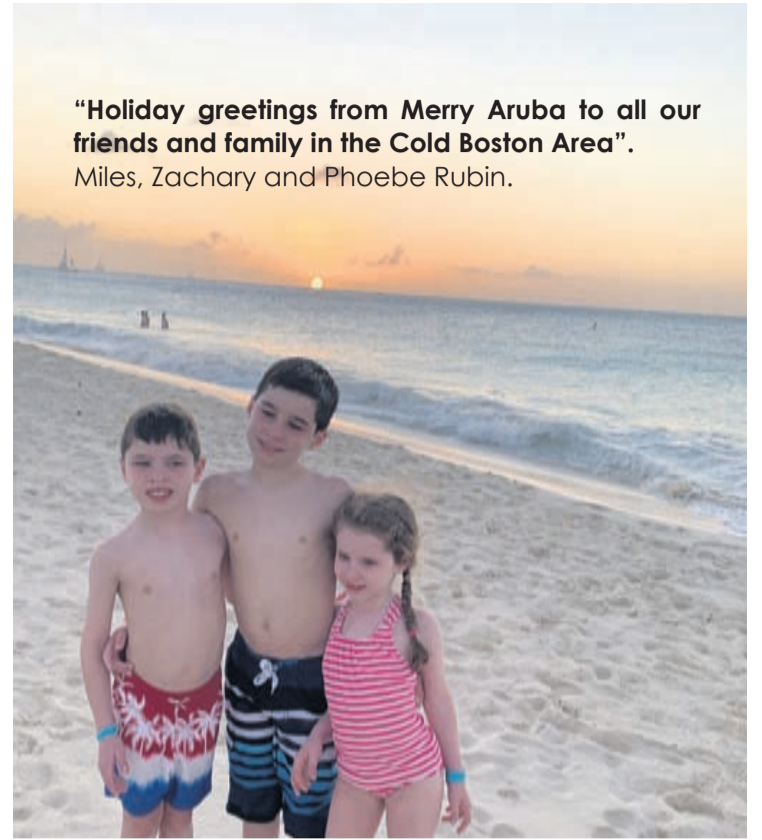
Aruba to me..... Christmas Edition

ORANJESTAD — You are here for Christmas or New Year and we would like to portrait you! Send a Christmas and Happy New Year greeting to your loved ones, friends or colleagues back home.

Complete the sentence: Holiday Greeting from Merry Aruba to
Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish this between December 22nd and 31st. Isn't that a special way to show your loved ones that even though you are far apart you are still close at heart everyday. Please do note: By submitting photos, text

or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. ☐

"Holidays greetings from Merry Aruba to all of our friends in Boston"
From Tom and Allison



"Holiday greetings from Merry Aruba to all our friends and family in the Cold Boston Area".
Miles, Zachary and Phoebe Rubin.

Attractions and Sightseeing locations in Aruba



ORANJESTAD — There are enough sightseeing locations on the island to fill up a month-long vacation. Aruba's beaches are a big attraction, and although it's great to spend long days just relaxing on the beach and listening to the ocean, there are also plenty of opportunities to get to know Aruba's most attractive sights, historical and natural attractions, and museums. Check out these attractions you don't want to miss!

Blue Horses in Downtown, Oranjestad

This series of 8 sculptures were created by native Aruban artist Osaira Muyale. She named the project Paarden Baai, which translates to "Horse Bay". The statues were installed in 2015 and pay homage to the rich history of Aruba's horse trading industry. In the 17th Century Aruba was used by many countries (Europe, South America, Caribbean islands, and the Mediterranean) as a trading post. The most popular being

cattle and horse trading. Horses were once the most important sources of livelihood for Aruba.

For 4 centuries the horse and cattle trade ran strong. At any given time Aruba was home to herds of thousands of horses that roamed the island. Aruba being the perfect trading post encouraged an extremely diverse culture and is the reason almost all Arubans speak more than 1 or 2 languages.

Each of the 8 bright royal blue horses is unique and carries its own name and personality. Pictured above is the mare Sinforosa, but you can also find Saturnina, Escapia, Rosalina, Eufrosina, Ambrosio, Bonifacia, and Celestina. The sculptures embody strength, nobility, grace, beauty and freedom. They represent the historical moment where the horses jumped from the ship decks into the Caribbean and swam to the Aruban Bay.

When you visit Aruba be sure to explore downtown Oranjestad and try to find all 8! ☐

NOW AVAILABLE!

BlueAruba Realty

Luxury Penthouse

at Eagle Beach

Two levels of spectacular ocean views and all the great amenities Blue Residences has to offer

Gelatissimo brings Gelato-Daze this Holiday Season



ORANJESTAD - The happiest time of the year is here, and Gelatissimo has got you covered. This holiday season, Gelatissimo is bringing the holiday spirit with various holiday inspired products and offers to their clients, customers, and gelato-lovers alike.

Gelatissimo also has the exclusive vintage gelato cart, the perfect addition to all holiday inspired events and happenings. The vintage gelatissimo cart comes to your event, with the option to choose six gelato flavors of your choice, a gelato host serving each attendee with care, and transportation to and from each event.

Furthermore, Gelatissimo is bringing a twist to their freshly

made waffle cone and basket this year with a dual-colored option, green and red, reminding clients of our pistachio and wild berry flavored gelatos.

The jolly dual-colored popsicle has also been added to the list, which comes in vanilla and a pistachio flavor. To top it off, our Mr. Grinch gelato flavor is a must try, with delectable pistachio and holiday-colored sprinkles, it is sure to light-up each person with joy.

Gelatissimo invites everyone to reach out to our sales representative at info@gelatissimoaruba.com for more information regarding all our gelato-daze offerings and products. □



Christmas Giveaway

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Live Music | For all existing members.
Doors Open 10:00 AM

\$10 Free Slot Play

Orchid Casino
Palm Beach, Aruba

Located at RUC, Palace Antillas For more information call :525-7777 Or Follow us on

ARUBA CLEAN

IS MORE DUSHI



Explore Aruba's Newest Rooftop Restaurant

Serving Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

OPEN DAILY FROM 7AM

@radissonbluaruba | T: 526-5000 | concierge@radissonbluaruba.com

The Kitchen Table enters seventh year of gastronomy with raving reviews: "The devil is in the details; we are in praise."

EAGLE BEACH — While in Aruba do yourself a favor and experience a night at The Kitchen Table. This is an elegant, classy, intimate, high-quality restaurant with an exceptional dining set-up. Dining here is an experience, a kind of sitting- at your- best- friend's or family's kitchen table where you feel and taste that the food contains love. The extra mile the owners and staff go has everything to do with running this lovely restaurant in a sincere, authentic way. In Spanish they say: 'Mi casa es tu casa' meaning my house is your house and that describes exactly what you will feel during a night at The Kitchen Table.

The 8-course ecstatic food trip starts with a warm welcome and sparkling wine at the patio of The Kitchen Table's new location at Paradise Beach Villas as of 6.00PM. The chef's table concept is happening on the second floor of the owners 'restaurant Asi Es Mi Peru, another highly recommended establishment. But we are here now to guide you through the concept of The Kitchen Table, so let's go.

Taking you upstairs is literally taking you into an ambiance of warmth, coziness, classic elegance, and intimacy. You are treated like queen and king while sitting in noble chairs at a huge table. Owners Roxanna Salinas and Jan van Nes are warm and welcoming hosts and Chef David Lizano and Sous-Chef Xalsky Schwengle enthusiastically share their deep knowledge of the beautiful dishes that will be presented to you. Get ready to dive into the tastebuds tickling journey to the Caribbean, Peruvian and international cuisine. To pair the perfect wines three sommeliers were invited to make the selection.



Table full foodies

The restaurant just got its new menu out, so this is the time to reserve your spot at the table. A Caribbean Peruvian Snack Trio is the enchanting first appetizer existing of a Chicken Empanada, Crab & Shrimp Egg-roll and a Cucumber & Tuna Nikkei. This is paired with a delicate Ruffino Oviato (Italy), just perfect. Taking us to the next round we are presented a Mahi Mahi Tartare, delicious and combined with the Spanish Santiago Ruiz Albarino, we are in heaven. What follows is a personal favorite, the Beef Tataki with Quinoa accompanied by La Fage, Miraflores Rose wine from France. This is an amazing dish. In between the courses the owner and chef explain about the ingredients, preparation, and origins of the dishes in turns, it is truly an interesting and exciting presentation. The Peruvian Red Snapper Casserole is a surprising, wonderful tasting and in complete balance with the USA Cline Viognier from Sonoma Coast. My American-Ecuadorian neighbor was thrilled with this dish and who would be a better judge than she, after all she is from the region. The guests are clearly having a good time and we are in awe so far. The Kitchen Table builds this evening in an upward trend, and we proceed with Scallops and Shrimps within a Risotto of green Peas Puree with a foam of Coconut Milk Sauce. A mouth-melting experience and added to the culinary joy is a USA wine from Yolo County, Phantom Chardonnay. From the Caribbean, Peru we travel to Argentina presented to us with a Veal in her Jus and paired with a beautiful Lunta Malbec. There is no great dinner without a sweet goodbye and The Kitchen Table makes sure that you will not forget them by signing off with a fantastic dessert: Mango popsicle and a Three-layered Cheesecake together with a Portuguese Osborne Port. We asked a couple from New York how they liked the experience: "The devil is in the details; every tiny part here is balanced, and savors are matched in an unmatched way. We are in praise."

The secret formula

The Peruvian-born Roxanna Salinas and her husband Jan van Nes are the secret formu-



la behind The Kitchen Table's success. You can tell making the customers happy is their main priority. The couple takes a personal approach to what they do, this is not about running a business as usual. This is more about making you feel welcomed home, as well as being pampered. They bring top hospitality, experience and authenticity to the table. Within this gourmet dinner concept the two blended the Peruvian culinary art of Roxanna's top kitchen team and Jan's expertise from The Kitchen Table. The result is one big trip of delight, indulge and tickling of your taste buds. The Kitchen Table welcomes you with open arms every Tuesday to Saturday. An evening at The Kitchen Table will be noted as unforgettable in your book of vacation memories, as it stands out from the regular island dinners.

The Kitchen Table is open from Tuesday to Saturday. Have a peak on their website www.thekitchentableinaruba.com or call them at +297-280 7117. □



'We have stock': Smaller stores aim for last-minute shoppers

NEW YORK (AP) — After a wearying nearly two years of the pandemic, independent retailers are cautiously hoping their holiday seasons will be bright, despite the challenges this year ranging from supply chain snags to shortages of hot holiday items.

Many businesses ordered decorations, toys, stocking stuffers and other items well in advance this year and have turned to smaller vendors to fill in any gaps in their inventory. They've reached out directly to customers on social media. And they're hoping that shortages at bigger stores stemming from supply chain issues this year will lead to a burst of last-minute shopping in their stores. So far, worries about omicron and rising cases haven't made a measurable dent on holiday shopping. For the week that ended Dec. 18, store traffic was up nearly 20% from a year earlier, though down 23% from the same week in the pre-pandemic year of 2019, according to Sensoromatic Solutions. But there are still a few crucial shopping days left.

Small retailers are hoping they can capture some of the expected growth in holiday sales. The holiday shopping season is crucial because it can account for 20% or more of annual sales for retailers, and boosts store traffic and new customers. The National Retail Federation predicts a sales increase of 8.5% to 10.5% for all of November and December, after 8% growth in those months in 2020.

American consumers, flush with cash from government stimulus, rising stock prices and increases to their home equity, have kept spending despite high inflation and the ongoing pandemic. That's put pressure on the global supply chain, leaving business owners scrambling to stock up on the products consumers want.

Last December, vendors warned Teresa Pries that shipping costs would be on the rise. So Pries, owner of two Revival 23 clothing and gift boutiques in Fresno



Ann Cantrell, owner of Annie's Blue Ribbon General Store poses for a photo outside her store, Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021, in the Brooklyn borough of New York.

and Clovis, California, took a gamble for this year: She ordered about four times what she normally would before the price increases kicked in. She also rented storage units for the first time to have room for the extra inventory.

"It's a little scary being a small business investing so heavily, but it has really paid off, our customers are thrilled," she said. "We thought okay, let's go for it. It's probably one of the best business decisions we had. Scary but good."

That gamble has paid off big time for Pries; her sales are up 90% compared with the same period last year. Now, her worry is less whether she bought too much, but the fact that she's selling out of items.

"I'm nearly sold out of every single candle, which has been a big gift item," she said.

As far as any worries about omicron putting a damper on store traffic: "We haven't seen anything that would indicate that is a factor," she said.

Other businesses are keeping up practices they started during the pandemic. Ann Cantrell has owned Annie's Blue Ribbon General Store in Brooklyn for 14 years. She said social media promotions to reach out to customers during the pandemic are still boosting sales, including a video of new items each Friday.

"When something new comes in we put it in our (Instagram and Facebook) Story online," she said. "We really relied heavily on that video every Friday, it started during pandemic and got an immediate reaction."

Still, she fears some sales will be hampered by the supply chain. For important items she ordered from multiple vendors. For example, she

ordered Hanukkah gelt — chocolate coins wrapped in foil — from three vendors and got two out of three.

"I think this is the year when you see it you buy it, on some levels with the supply chain" she said. "We're grateful for what we have in store, and waiting for exciting things we ordered months ago and are still waiting for."

Corey O'Loughlin and Nina Vitalino co-own Prep Obsessed in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, an online boutique that also has a brick-and-mortar location. Black Friday sales jumped more than 30% over last year, a relief for the owners. "I think that our biggest takeaway (from the Black Friday shopping weekend) is we're limited only by the

inventory we can get, and speed of shipping product," Vitalino said. "If we're able to get more great product we can sell it."

They've had some delays problems getting items from some larger suppliers, such as clothing, gift and home decor merchant Mud Pie. So they've gotten creative, sourcing "smaller vendors, mom and pop wholesalers that we haven't done big business with before," Vitalino said.

"Customers are regularly commenting about how pleased they are with our inventory levels and selection," O'Loughlin said. "Most large retailers are completely picked over at this point, but we have full stock of our items."

Businesses are hoping for a surge during the last few days before Christmas. Guido Campello, co-CEO of Journelle, operates four lingerie stores, three in Manhattan and one in Chicago, Illinois. Journelle also has its own lingerie line. They stocked up about 35% more for the holidays. So far it has paid off, with sales up 30% over the Black Friday shopping weekend compared with a year ago.

Having product in stock will boost last-minute shopping, Campello expects.

"It's very clear, my team has all been calling each other, going out to stores to shop for ourselves," he said. "Nobody has inventory, nobody has sizes. This is a size driven category. Every single bra has to have 14 sizes and different colors."

While sellouts are always an issue at the last minute, Campello says they're putting the word out they'll have plenty of offerings. The store's social advertising leading up to Christmas is communicating: "We have stock, we've got you covered." □

Associated Press



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Touch down
 - 5 Takes in
 - 10 Homer classic
 - 12 Laughable
 - 13 Door holder's words
 - 14 Ventilation pipes
 - 15 Gifted
 - 16 Mythical monster
 - 18 Porch noisemakers
 - 20 Motor part
 - 21 Mayor's domain
 - 23 Clumsy one
 - 24 Needs to
 - 26 Head features
 - 28 Vitality
 - 29 Thailand, once
 - 31 "— Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas"
 - 32 Early space travelers
 - 36 Entrance for Santa
 - 39 Contented sound
 - 40 Hummer's instrument
 - 41 Pound part
 - 43 Tipped
- DOWN**
- 1 Purple hue
 - 2 First Hebrew letter
 - 3 "The Untouchables" villain
 - 4 Block up
 - 5 "What — tell you"
 - 6 "One" on a one
 - 7 First lap leader
 - 8 Snares
 - 9 Tahini base
 - 11 Lies
 - 17 FDR's successor
 - 19 Rap performers
 - 22 Response to "Who, me?"
 - 24 Flammable gas
 - 25 Adds to the workforce
 - 27 French friend
 - 28 Bully
 - 30 Rink
 - 33 Craze
 - 34 Accords
 - 35 Paper unit
 - 37 —
 - 38 Silent
 - 42 Arles article

T	I	N	S	E	L	A	F	A	R
O	R	I	O	L	E	C	I	T	Y
R	E	P	A	S	T	T	R	E	E
			R	E	S	C	U	E	
S	A	S			L	A	P	S	E
P	I	T		C	H	I	L	L	A
E	L	O		H	E	P		A	M
N	E	C	T	A	R	S		C	O
T	Y	K	E	S		S	E	A	S
		I	A	M	B	I	C		
I	O	N	S		A	D	E	S	T
L	U	G	E		H	O	N	K	A
L	I	S	T		S	L	E	I	G

Yesterday's answer

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
10				11		12			
13						14			
15				16	17				
18			19					20	
			21			22		23	
	24	25				26	27		
28				29	30				
31					32			33	34
35			37	38				39	
40						41	42		
43						44			
45							46		

12-23

A XYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-23 CRYPTOQUOTE
O U X O C J F J D O S J Z J G D O T F X D
J Y O U X Z X P M P M X N U M T D O F P D
F J M V T V I P V W O U X X V W J Y

D N U J R . P R T N X N J J Q X M
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: CHRISTMAS IS A SEASON FOR KINDLING THE FIRE FOR HOSPITALITY IN THE HALL, THE GENIAL FLAME OF CHARITY IN THE HEART. — WASHINGTON IRVING

Tequila byproduct spill fouls Mexican reservoir, kills fish



Dead, decomposing fish float in Las Villas river, which feeds the San Onofre reservoir in Ayotlan, Mexico, Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021. Associated Press

AYOTLAN, Mexico (AP) — When Jesús Solís noticed the waters of the reservoir where he had spent his entire life beginning to darken and a rotten odor taking hold, he was overcome with fear. Within weeks those initial concerns were confirmed as tens of thousands of dead fish floated to the surface, apparent victims of a spill of tequila distilling waste into a western Mexico water source. The 44-year-old fisherman watched for days as the fish he had helped raise and that he relied on for income went belly up along the shores of the San Onofre reservoir in Jalisco state. Authorities determined that millions of liters of a residue known as vinasse created in tequila's distillation spilled into the Las Animas creek that flows into the res-

ervoir. Jalisco is the heart of Mexico's tequila industry. Some 40% of the state's industrially cultivated land is covered in the blue agave used to make tequila. The environmental disaster has shaken the residents of Ayotlan, who fear the contaminated waters could pose a threat to their crops and devastate their local fishing cooperative whose families have lost their aquaculture investment and been left without income. Orión Flores, director of Attention to Socio-environmental Conflicts for the state of Jalisco's environmental protection agency, said 60 to 80 tons of dead fish had been removed from the reservoir. He added that the die off could continue for days because there was significant aqua-

culture there. Aldo Castañeda Villanueva, a professor and researcher specializing in water management at the University of Guadalajara, said "it could take years" until the small reservoir is cleaned up. How long it takes to return to its previous state will depend on weather, prevention of additional spills and how much rain it will take to dilute the contamination. He said polluting spills of tequila waste were common, but seldom made headlines. He recalled a 2011 case in the Tuxcacuesco river that led to a massive fish die off.

A student thesis at the University of Guadalajara determined that vinasse from distillers and sewage had flowed from the Tonaya river into the Tuxcacuesco. Rather than harvesting their fish, Solís and the other fishermen of his cooperative spent the last days of November scooping them up with an excavator on loan from the city. Tilapia, mojarra, carp and little silvery charales were buried in pits with lime to combat the potent stench of rotting fish.

"It was a really difficult moment to see all of our savings, life, going into those pits," said Solís, recalling how since he was 8 years old he started fishing with his father. "I felt so sad then, so powerless, so much anger." Now he worries about what his family will do without their only source of income.

Mauricio Bando, another fisherman, is just hanging on because he took some of his earnings to open a small shop. Now selling snacks and essentials allows him to keep his wife and four kids fed.

"This doesn't give me much because it's small, but at least I survive," said the 43-year-old. □

Time Share Resales + Realty

Own or Rent a piece of the Rock
For up to 70 % Off stay @5 Star Resort
* All inventory available
Visit our website :
www.halleytimetravelaruba.com
For more info call:(297) 630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com
also visit(new):
www.halleyadventures.com

Honey Dolls
MASSAGE AND ESCORT SERVICE

Beautiful Latin Girls
Pick-up & Delivery

Serving Men - Couple - Women - All Genders

+297 565-9535

WWW.PLEASUREINARUBA.COM



For Sale week 52 fixed
Divi Golf Eagle building ground
floor 1 bedroom sleeps 4
Price: US\$17,000 OBO

Classifieds

HTTA
Do you want to sell your Time -share, Condo or house?
Call the experts 36 years of doing honest Business
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Aruba Divi phoenix
Palm beach
2 BR penthouse week 49 room#770
30 weeks remain \$18 K
2 BR week 50 room # 630/631
32 weeks remain \$18 K
Call : 011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Divi Village
Eagle Beach
Studio week # 1 room # 8201
19 weeks remain \$ 7 K
Studio week # 1 room # 3101
31 weeks remain \$7 K
Call : 011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Ambassador wings (casa del mar)
Eagle beach
1 BR week 52 room # 1235
Price : \$ 10 K
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Renaissance Ocean Suites
Private Islands
1 BR week # 51 room # 2530
Ocean view \$ 11 K
1 BR week 51 and 52 room # 2314
Garden view \$ 22K both weeks
1 BR week 1 room #2522 10K
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
la Cabana Beach and casino
Eagle beach
1 BR week # 49 room # 220 A
1 BR week # 50 room # 308 A
Price : \$5 K each
Call : 011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
House for sale
Spaans lagoon
3 Bedroom 2 bath Ocean view
Price : \$340 K
Call :011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

214917

HTTA
Condo For sale
Tierra Del Sol Golf
3 bedroom 2 1/2 bath
Ocean view Fully furnished
With garage \$450 K
Call :011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Condo for sale
Gold Coast
2 Bedroom , 2 bath \$ 290 K
3 Bedroom , 3 Bath \$480 K
2 BR 2 Bath with pool \$385K
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Condo for sale
Le Vent on eagle beach
2 Bedroom 2 Bath 5th floor \$ 800K
3 Bedroom 2 bath ground floor \$800K
Call: 011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Eagle resort
Eagle beach
1 BR wk # 2 room # 2579
1 BR wk # 3,4 room # 3556
Call: 011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Eagle Resort
Eagle beach
3 BR wk # 51 and 52 room # 2548
\$60 K both weeks
2 BR wk # 2 3,4 room # 3508
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Divi Village Golf
Eagle beach
Studio wk # 2 room # 4205 \$9 K
1 Bedroom wk #3 room # 4102 \$8 K
22 weeks remain each
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Divi Village Golf
Eagle beach
1 BR wk # 3,4,5 room # 4226
24 weeks remain \$9 K each
2 BR wk# 3 room # 4215/4216
23 weeks remain \$ 18 K
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Divi Village
Eagle beach
Platinum floating week
1 BR 18 weeks remain \$ 8 K
Studio 25 weeks remain \$7 K
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Costa Linda 2 Bedr
week 53
5 nights \$2400
02 jan. - 07 jan.
Call: 564 2686

Casa del Mar 2BR/2B
Week 2/1113 (17k);
Week 5/1315 (19k);
Week 8/1113 (18k);
Week 8/1409 (18k);
Week 9/1218 (16k);
Week 10/1207 (16k);
Week 13/1509 (13k);
Week 14/1308 (13k);
Week 15/1217 (10k).
CDMOwner@gmail.com
U.S. Cell: (860)992-3890

214832

Marriott surf and ocean club
2 BR Platinum Ocean Front \$28 K
2 BR Platinum plus ocean front Wk 51 and 52 \$160 K both weeks
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

214916

HTTA
Aruba Divi Phoenix
Palm beach
1 Br wk # 50 room # 1406
30 weeks remain \$ 8 K
1 Br wk #52 room # 401
25 weeks remain \$ 12 K
Call : 011-297-6301307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com

HTTA
Divi village Golf
Eagle beach
2 BR wk# 51 room # 2205/2206
24 weeks remain \$ 18 K
2 BR wk#1,2,3 room # 2308/2309
24 weeks remain \$ 18 K each
Call:011-297-630-1307
johnnypaesch@gmail.com



Editor
Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Assistant Director

Xiomara Arends

Editors

Liza Koolman (Management assistant)
Richard Brooks

Sales

Linda Reijnders
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto
Pilar Flores

Columnists

Anthony Croes

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
@arubatoday



HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel.524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Dakota Tel. 588 7364

San Nicolas:

San Nicolas Tel. 584 5712

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118



facebook.com/arubatoday/

Review: 'The King's Man' can't find the right tone

By LINDSEY BAHR

There are distinct pleasures to be had in watching Ralph Fiennes play the lead in an action franchise at this stage in his career.

For as fun as he is as erudite bon vivants, scoundrels and snobs, you always leave wanting more M. Gustav, more Laurence Laurentz, more Harry Hawkes. In that spirit, "The King's Man," a prequel to Matthew Vaughn's irreverent "Kingsman" series, provides a definite service, and Fiennes is as charming as ever. But it's also hard not to wish he had a better movie than this to exhibit both his singular charisma and combat skills.

"The King's Man," which jumps back in time to World War I to the early days of the bespoke spy agency, is an improvement to the last Kingsman movie, which among other deranged choices had Julianne Moore feed someone a burger made of human flesh that she ground and grilled herself. This one is decidedly quaint than that, but it's still a Kingsman movie — manic, cheeky and



This image released by 20th Century Studios shows Ralph Fiennes in a scene from "The King's Man." Associated Press

vulgar— and it's not going to sell anyone who wasn't already on board. "The King's Man" also has the uneasy tension of its real historical context which the film wants to use for both sincere emotional beats and fodder for irreverence. At its heart, this is an origin story about a fictional spy agency that blames WWI and 20 million deaths on an embittered Scottish cashmere farmer. But this mysterious man, who is seen

only in shadows until a big reveal at the end, is played like an angrier and more sadistic but no less ridiculous Fat Bastard. And he is able to manipulate world leaders (Tom Hollander plays King George, Kaiser Wilhelm and Tsar Nicholas) with his sphere of influence that includes Rasputin (Rhys Ifans), Erik Jan Hanussen (Daniel Bruhl), Mata Hari (Valerie Pachner) and Gavrilo Princip (Joel Basman).

Fiennes, who also executive produced, plays the Duke of Oxford who we're introduced to as his wife is gunned down in front of him and his young son during the Boer War. He returns to England with one mission: To protect his son Conrad.

A few years pass and Conrad has grown into a dashing and patriotic lad, played with admirable dignity by Harris Dickinson, who wants nothing more

than to join the army. Fearing the front lines, the Duke tries to convince Conrad to join his little spy group composed of himself and two domestic servants, Polly (Gemma Arterton) and Shola (Djimon Hounsou), and manipulate world politics behind the scenes. After almost preventing the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, their first adventure as a foursome involves going to Russia to either sell Rasputin on entering the war or kill him. The whole sequence is jaw-droppingly perverse as they try to lure Rasputin, who Ifans plays like a madcap cartoon rock star, with Conrad and poisoned baked goods that he promptly expels with grotesque theatricality. In true Kingsman fashion, this also includes Fiennes removing his trousers, upper thigh licking and Rasputin dancing his way through a fight set to the "1812 Overture." Subtlety is not in their vocabulary, so some whiplash is to be expected when the film suddenly turns into a war drama, and then back to absurdity again. □

'Summer of Soul,' 'Drive My Car' make Oscars shortlist



This image released by Searchlight Pictures shows Nina Simone performing at the Harlem Cultural Festival in 1969, featured in the documentary "Summer of Soul."

Associated Press

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP Film Writer

Documentaries about Julia Child, "Black Woodstock," the pandemic and The Velvet Underground and acclaimed international films like Japan's "Drive My

Car," Iran's "A Hero" and Norway's "The Worst Person in the World" just got a little closer to scoring Oscar nominations.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences on Tuesday Wednesday

unveiled its shortlists for several categories, including documentary feature, international feature, original song, original score, visual effects and makeup and hairstyling. Nominations for all categories for the 94th Oscars will be announced on Feb. 8.

Members of the documentary branch of the academy culled from 138 eligible films to pick 15 shortlist selections, including two pandemic-themed films ("In the Same Breath," "The First Wave"), Questlove's "Summer of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised)" about a near-forgotten 1969 music event, Julie Cohen and Betsy West's "Julia" and Todd Haynes' "The Velvet Underground." Other notable selections are "The Rescue," about the Thai soccer team and their rescue for a

remote cave, "Procession," "Attica" and "Flee." "Billie Eilish: The World's a Little Blurry" also made the cut.

"Flee," an animated documentary about an Afghan refugee made by Danish filmmaker Jonas Poher Rasmussen was also among the films that advanced in the international feature category. Other strong contenders include Ryusuke Hamaguchi "Drive My Car," which has been a critics group darling, Asghar Farhadi's Iranian drama "A Hero," Italian director Paolo Sorrentino's semi-autobiographical "The Hand of God" and Joachim Trier's dark romantic comedy "The Worst Person in the World," from Norway. France's entry, "Titane," did not make the cut despite having won the top prize at the Cannes Film Festival earlier this year. Original songs in conten-

tion include some from major music stars like Beyoncé's "Be Alive," from "King Richard," Billie Eilish's James Bond song "No Time To Die," Van Morrison's "Down to Joy" from "Belfast," U2's "Sing 2" song, Kid Cudi and JAY-Z's "Guns Go Bang" from "The Harder they Fall," Brian Wilson's "Where I Belong" and Ariana Grande's "Don't Look Up." Composers Jonny Greenwood ("The Power of the Dog," "Spencer") and Hans Zimmer ("Dune," "No Time To Die") could be in store for double original song nominations come Feb. 8. Blockbusters like "Dune" and "No Time To Die" also advanced in a number of categories including visual effects, sound and makeup and hairstyling. Winners will be revealed at the ceremony on Sunday, March 27, which will be broadcast live on ABC. □

SAMSUNG

The Holidays begin with Galaxy



- Get **\$30** store credit when you spend **\$200** or more.
- Get **\$100** store credit when you purchase a **Z Flip3 | Z Fold3 | S21 | S21+ | S21 Ultra | S20 FE | Note 20 or Note 20 Ultra.**
- Get **\$100** discount when you purchase a **Galaxy Watch3 | Watch4 or Watch4 Classic.**
- Get **\$25** discount when you purchase a **Galaxy Buds2 | Buds Pro or Buds Live.**

Limited time offer valid until December 27 or while stocks last. Limited device quantities. Offer available at selected Boolchand's locations. Contact stores for details on product availability and restrictions. Terms and conditions apply.

B BOOLCHAND'S
SINCE 1930

Packers stay on top of AP Pro32 poll; Chiefs, Bucs follow

By **SIMMI BUTTAR**

NEW YORK (AP) — With three games to go in the regular season, Aaron Rodgers and the Green Bay Packers are on quite a roll.

— NFC North champs.

— Top record overall in the NFL at 11-3.

— And maintaining their top spot in the latest AP Pro32 poll.

The Packers earned all 12 of the first-place votes for 384 points in balloting Wednesday by media members who regularly cover the NFL.

The Packers clinched their division on Sunday after holding off the Baltimore Ravens. And the Packers will stay at home on Christmas as they host the Cleveland Browns.

"Aaron Rodgers is starting to put some separation between himself and the rest of the field in the MVP race, and a Packers team that had a tougher time than expected in Baltimore is still in the driver's seat for the No. 1 seed in the NFC," Newsday's Bob Glauber said.

The surging Kansas City Chiefs, who have won seven in a row, moved up two spots to No. 2 after topping the Los Angeles Chargers in OT last



Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes (15) celebrates after the Chiefs defeated the Los Angeles Chargers in an NFL football game Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021, in Inglewood, Calif. The Chiefs won 34-28.

Associated Press

week. The defending champion Tampa Bay Buccaneers slipped a spot to No. 3 after getting blanked at home by New Orleans on Sunday night.

The LA Rams gained two spots to

No. 4 after getting past the Seattle Seahawks on Tuesday night in a game delayed two days because of a COVID-19 outbreak.

Another NFC team moving up two places is Dallas, now at No. 5 in the

poll. The Cowboys will face Washington on Sunday night in a key NFC East matchup.

The New England Patriots fell three places to No. 6 after losing to the Indianapolis Colts on Saturday night. The Colts' 27-17 win lifted them four spots to No. 8.

"(Running back Jonathan) Taylor and a dynamite, turnover-feasting defense make them a scary playoff team," Fox Sports' John Czarnecki said of Indianapolis.

The Patriots host the Bills on Sunday in a game that could go a long way toward deciding the AFC East. The Bills inched up a spot to round out the top 10 after handling the Carolina Panthers.

The Colts head to Arizona to take on the Cardinals on Christmas night. The Cardinals, who were No. 1 in the poll as recently as two weeks ago, dropped another two spots to No. 7 after their stunning blowout loss at Detroit.

And the Tennessee Titans, trying to fight off the Colts in the AFC South, open Week 16 as they host the San Francisco 49ers on Thursday night. The Titans are ranked ninth, the Niners are 12th. □



Let's make this world better for everyone

Start something *priceless*™



For every 5 contactless transactions with your Mastercard, you donate 1 tree to forests in geographies that represent the greatest global need.

Terms and conditions apply.



NHL announces players won't be allowed to go to Olympics

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
AP Hockey Writer

The inevitability sunk in for Steven Stamkos a full day before the NHL made it official that players would not be allowed to participate in the Beijing Olympics.

Left off Canada's Olympic roster in 2010, injured after being named to the team in 2014 and unable to go in 2018 because the NHL opted out, the Tampa Bay Lightning captain crystallized what it meant that the pandemic was wiping out participation at the 2022 Beijing Games, too.

"That was my third legitimate chance of playing in the Olympics, and here I am sitting (here) probably not even going to get to play a game," Stamkos said. "It's disappointing, but at the same time there's not much that we can do." Commissioner Gary Bettman made the announcement Wednesday, making official what seemed



Russia forward Yevgeni Malkin seals off the puck from USA defenseman Ryan McDonagh in the first period of a men's ice hockey game at the 2014 Winter Olympics, Saturday, Feb. 15, 2014, in Sochi, Russia.

Associated Press

inevitable in recent days when a rash of positive COVID-19 test results caused several teams to shut down and the list of postponed

games ballooned to 50. The league will use the previously scheduled Feb. 6-22 Olympic break to make up those games and others

that need to be rescheduled.

"Given the profound disruption to the NHL's regular-season schedule caused

by recent COVID-related events ... Olympic participation is no longer feasible," Bettman said. "Our focus and goal have been and must remain to responsibly and safely complete the entirety of the NHL regular season and Stanley Cup playoffs in a timely manner."

In a separate statement, National Hockey League Players' Association executive director Don Fehr said that while there was a clear path to Beijing before COVID-19 intervened, the Olympic break is now needed to make up games.

Stamkos, Swedish teammate Victor Hedman and many of the NHL's best players may have missed their Olympic window entirely after growing up hoping to one day represent their country on sports' biggest international stage. Hedman said Tuesday, "Us to not be able to go, it's going to hurt for a while." □